

Low Flush Toilet Figures

All of our islands are freshly off a prolonged drought that pretty much lasted from early spring into October. Islanders everywhere were concerned about their wells and/or organized system's ability to produce, without the necessity of water restrictions or irreparable damage to well quality and/or quantity. While all sensible islanders did their bit for conservation and preservation, the question always arises, what more can I do, and will it really make a difference to my aquifer and my community.

Following are some hard figures that you can cite when touting the benefits of installing low flush toilets and achieving major daily consumption reductions with no real conscious effort or lifestyle changes on your part.

Remember that toilets represent fully 30% of the total consumption for any household.

Each of these examples is based on 5 flushes per day, per person, per household, final figures extrapolated to 2 persons per household.

13 liter toilet:

$13L \times 5 \text{ flushes} \times 365 \text{ days} = 23,725 \text{ l per year}$

For a 2 person household, this puts toilet consumption at $23,725 \times 2 = 47,450 \text{ L}$.

6L toilet:

$6L \times 5 \text{ flushes} \times 365 \text{ days} = 10,950 \text{ L per year}$

For a 2 person household, toilet consumption equals $10,950 \times 2 = 21,900 \text{ L}$

With a 6L, water saved over 13 L is 216%

3L dual flush toilet: factored on 3 flushes at 3L & 2 flushes at 6 L

$3L \times 3 \text{ flushes} \times 365 \text{ days} = 3285 \text{ L}$

$6L \times 2 \text{ flushes} \times 365 \text{ days} = 4380 \text{ L}$

Total annual liters for dual flush = 7665L

For a 2 person household, total toilet consumption is $7665 \times 2 = 15,330 \text{ L}$

With a dual 3L/6L, water saved over 13L toilet is 309.52%

With a dual 3/6L, water saved over a 6L toilet is 108.33%

If we haven't glazed your eyes over with the hard math, it is easy to see that with one minor modification to your home, you can make major contributions towards water preservation with very little effort. Some organized water systems have set aside a set amount in their annual budgets, in amounts varying from \$1000 to \$2000 per year, designated as subsidies towards low flush toilet installation for their stakeholders. This simple move can easily save the cost of drilling a new well in the long term. If your water district has not looked at this conservation method, attend your AGM and ask that they consider designating some of your tax dollars for this project, and then support them in their efforts on your behalf.

Installation quotes we have received vary from the \$75.00 to \$80.00 range. Old toilets, always as clean as possible please, can be put through the crusher at your local recycling yard. The only request our hard working recycle folk have is that you break the toilet into a few pieces before taking it to their yard.

On another conservation front, MIIWSS has written the CRD Building office and CRD Environmental Services in a quest to have the installation of rainwater collection systems placed within the building code, much in the same way that low flush toilets are now mandatory in all new construction. If you feel this would be a good move, please write to CRD SGI Building Inspection, 625 Fisgard St, Victoria, P.O. Box 1000, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2S6. Attention: Robert Guitterez.

It will remain, of course, for the current homeowners to see the merits of adding rainwater collection systems as an asset to their home and their lifestyle. A good basic system will have a minimum of

2000 IMPG, and odds are that you will add to that over the years, so plan space at the time of #1 installation. This gives you the freedom to enjoy a hot tub, water your garden, have some on site fire protection, and in the case of an isolating emergency such as an earthquake where gravity fed systems are sure to be off, your storage and a small bottle of bleach will give your family potable water until service can be restored. There much to be said for adding to the independence cherished by islanders, as well as being able to take care of your family in emergencies.

Regarding our letter to the Ministry of Environment regarding the growing practice of well hydrofracturing, we have received a reply that our letter has been forwarded to the Groundwater Advisory Board, a group of professionals and government reps that are involved in the development of the Groundwater Protection Regulation and amendments to the Water Act.

3rd Annual Water Workshop: WATER CULT: Climate, Usage, Legislation, Treatment, Saturday April 28, 8a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the school gym. Registration is \$20 and will start March 1 through April 15.

Each Island paper will have a full page ad in the March issue c/w registration form. The speaker's list and commercial displays are fully booked. Guest speakers will include Phil Hill ,Climatologist with Natural Resources Canada, Sylvia Kenney Groundwater Protection Officer and Pat Lapcevic, hydrologist, both with the Ministry of Environment, Chris Flint from the insurance industry, Gary Gibson, VIHA Chief Health Inspector speaking on the health of your well, Alan Dakin, geologist addressing hydrofracturing, Brian Dixon-Warren speaks to living 100% on rainwater collection, Adam Schueur, from Watertiger on water treatment & filtration, Dan Osbourne of Osbourne Electro-Mechanics speaks to pump selection and maintenance, and Doug Sproule of Sustainable Solutions International on low flush vs. old toilet design.

Our displays will include Osbourne Electro Mechanics, Premier Tanks, Corix (formerly Terasen) with meters and BFPs, Caroma conservation products, Water tiger.

There will be the usual information tables, free MB Lab tests kits, membership table, great lunch included, time for Q&A, and draw prizes. Memberships in MIIWSS remain at \$5.00 per person, and we are now taking new and renewals for 2007. MIIWSS is open to all islanders and water systems who share the same concerns about conservation, education, and our precious and finite water supply.

Well Mapping Project: We have mapped and tested 13 private wells across the island to date and will start computerizing the data this month. Those owners, and some districts, still need to get their test and drillers reports to us. If you have not done so, please leave the copies at Sussex Realty mailbox in a sealed envelope.

Remember to support your local water board and consider standing for a Trustee position at your next AGM. We will publish the AGM dates as the organized systems provide the times.

Mary E. Cooper,
Vice Chair, MIIWSS